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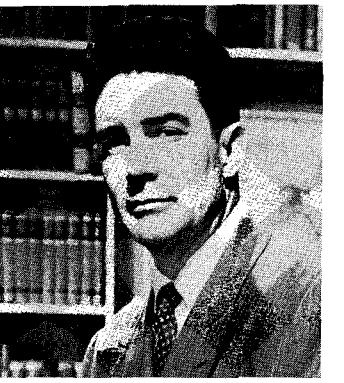

DAN SMOOT

AMERICA'S PROMISE

"No free government, or the blessings of liberty, can be preserved to any people, but . . . by a frequent recurrence to fundamental principles." — George Mason, in the Virginia Declaration of Rights, 1776

The first issue of *The Dan Smoot Report*—"This Is My Side"—was published June 29, 1955.

I have revised and republished that first issue two or three times, because it expresses the fundamental principles which form the bedrock of our magnificent American constitutional system. In 1960, I expanded "This Is My Side" into a little book, titled *America's Promise.*

America's Promise has gone through several printings and has been distributed around the globe. It has been called a handbook of Americanism, because it clearly and briefly states the fundamentals of American constitutional principles. It is a commentary on the Great Society of America which the Founding Fathers envisioned and provided for in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.

To President Lyndon B. Johnson, a great society means government-provided housing, government-guaranteed medical care, government-financed education, government-stabilized agriculture, government-subsidized arts, government-controlled industry, government-regulated jobs, government-created material prosperity—and universal equality, as defined and enforced by government.

To the men who founded our nation, and to those who developed it, a great society meant the direct opposite—it meant a political system which left people free to follow their own destinies, with God's help.

I agree with George Mason that "No free government, or the blessings of liberty, can be preserved by any people, but . . . by a frequent recurrence to fundamental principles." Hence, for this tenth anniversary issue of the *Report*, I present a condensation of *America's Promise*, to express once again the eternal principles of liberty which motivate and guide genuine constitutional conservatives.

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Between 1790 and 1921, great waves of immigration pounded the shores of America, bringing in twenty million Europeans. Why? What promise of America brought them here?

America is a fabulous country. From Puget Sound to the Florida Keys; from the thunder of Niagara to the sunbaked stillness of El Centro—America is a land of magnificent contrasts: a place of raw desolation and lush abundance; of quick money and sudden loss; of bitter ugliness and tender beauty.

America is a land whose lofty mountains and deep rivers bear names that are music on the tongue, names rich in the lore and legend of marvelous and mysterious Indian tribes who preferred death to surrender.

But America is more than poetry.

It is a land where men know that morality, conscience, and happiness are the exclusive possessions of individuals and can be achieved only by individual effort with divine help;

—Where *equality* signifies the equal importance of individuals before God and before the law, but recognizes the infinite diversity of talents, tastes, ambitions, capacities, and material conditions as natural for free men and essential to the sustenance and progress of human society;

—Where men realize that the tyranny of unrestricted majority rule can be even more terrible than the tyranny of a dictator;

—Where men, knowing that the ballot box is not enough to secure the blessings of liberty, established a constitutional system of limited government to guarantee personal freedom by law;

—Where stern men, firm in their faith in God, speak with divine authority when they say to their own government: "Thou shalt not abridge these freedoms which God hath given us."

For generations, it was taken for granted that the precious diamonds of human civilization were here, and only here—in America.

And there was sheer magic in the old American formula. It wrought miracles upon the swarming millions who came here seeking the promised land. In a miraculously short time, it produced the greatest civilization the world has ever seen.

Ancient feuds and class-conscious hatreds of Europe failed to take root in the soil of America —until recently, when they were planted and nourished by alien philosophies.

Only in the twentieth century have Americans begun to doubt, to fear, to lose their faith—lose their old confidence in the absolute rightness of American principles. One generation of Americans faltered in faith and understanding. Faltering, they did not care or did not perceive when leaders began to introduce worn-out quackeries of old-world collectivism into the American system.

And, as we lose our faith, we lose our strength.

We are told that the world is sick and needs our help; but we cannot cure the patient by contracting his fatal disease. We might give him hope of recovery if we showed him evidence of our own vigorous health and told him how to achieve that health himself. A man near death would benefit more by learning of a cure for his ailment than by having his hospital bills paid.

If the real and fascinating American story were told and understood throughout the world, tyranny everywhere might topple in a scramble of peoples trying to follow the American example.

All around us, frantic men are searching for new concepts and fresh approaches to achieve universal peace and prosperity. America needs no new discoveries in the realm of political ideas, or the launching of new social experiments. Our need now is for rediscovery and renewed understanding of the true and tried principles of Americanism.

In the striking record of our own country, the precious gem of human understanding lies buried. While civilization exhausts itself in fruitless efforts for peace, it is tragic that the one simple, proven, and effective formula is permitted to lie unheeded in the dusty, unturned pages of American history.

For many years, our government, and other American institutions, have been using our own

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money to brainwash us and our children of all patriotism, all love of country, all loyalty to our ancient ideals and traditions, in order to indoctrinate us with the ideals of internationalism — to prepare us for world citizenship.

Results are apparent.

When I was a boy, American school children were so steeped in the legends and traditions of America that they thrilled to feel themselves a part of their glorious heritage: Paul Revere, looking across the Charles River for signal lights in the church tower; a mud-spattered courier on a winded Virginia racing-mare dashing recklessly for the old state house in Philadelphia, to bring news of Benedict Arnold's march on Richmond; the noble, pock-marked face of Washington, stern with high purpose as he gives a simple order: *Post none but Americans on guard tonight.*

I talk to American children today who have never heard the illustrious names of the American Revolution—names which, for more than a century, were closer and more real to an American school child than names in the daily paper.

Americans of previous generations knew that America was a miracle that God had wrought: they could prove it.

In 1776, America was a sprawling colonial possession, a land of farms and small towns scattered along the eastern seaboard, populated by fewer than five million people. Yet, at the critical moment, this rural society sent to Philadelphia the largest assemblage of wise and learned statesmen ever to congregate in one room, in the entire history of the human race. Who could have done this without God?

Who, without reference to God, can explain that unique chapter in American history dealing with miraculous events in the lives of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson?

John Adams, second President of the United States, and Thomas Jefferson, third President, were enemies during much of their long lives. Both wrought many and great works in their time; but the greatest, for both, was their joint work at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, 1776, when the thirteen American colonies unanimously adopted the Declaration of Independence from England.

Jefferson wrote the magnificent Declaration, and the magnificence of Adams helped assure its adoption. The adoption of the Declaration marked the birth of the greatest nation in the annals of mankind.

There were fearful and wavering men at that Congress in Philadelphia—among them, John Hancock, presiding officer. The Declaration of Independence was before the Congress for a vote; but John Hancock urged caution, pointing out the benefits to Americans of being subjects of England. Timid men wanted delay and further negotiations. But John Adams, stern New Englander, stood before them, thundering:

"Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give my hand and my heart to this vote. It is true, indeed, that in the beginning we aimed not at independence. But there's a Divinity which shapes our ends. The injustice of England has driven us to arms; and, blinded to her own interest for our good, she has obstinately persisted, till independence is now within our grasp. We have but to reach forth to it, and it is ours.

"Why, then, should we defer the Declaration? Is any man so weak as now to hope for a reconciliation with England? . . .

"You and I, indeed, may rue it. We may not live to the time when this Declaration shall be made good. We may die; die Colonists; die slaves; die, it may be, ignominiously and on the scaffold.

"Be it so, be it so.

"If it be the pleasure of Heaven that my country shall require the poor offering of my life, the victim shall be ready . . . . But while I do live, let me have a country, or at least the hope of a country, and that a free country.

"But whatever may be our fate, be assured . . . that this Declaration will stand. It may cost treasure, and it may cost blood; but it will stand, and it will richly compensate for both.

"Through the thick gloom of the present, I see the brightness of the future, as the sun in heaven. We shall make this a glorious, an immortal day. When we are in our graves, our children will honor it. They will celebrate it

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with thanksgiving, with festivity, with bonfires, and illuminations. On its annual return they will shed tears, copious, gushing tears, not of subjection and slavery, not of agony and distress, but of exultation, of gratitude and of joy.

"Sir, before God, I believe the hour is come. My judgment approves this measure, and my whole heart is in it. All that I have, and all that I am, and all that I hope, in this life, I am now ready here to stake upon it; and I leave off as I began, that live or die, survive or perish, I am for the Declaration. It is my living sentiment, and by the blessing of God it shall be my dying sentiment, Independence now, and Independence forever."

Rejecting caution, the Congress voted unanimously with John Adams and adopted the Declaration of Independence.

John Adams died on Independence Day, July 4, 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

In their twilight years, he and Jefferson had become warm friends, by correspondence: Adams in Massachusetts, Jefferson in Virginia.

As he lay dying on the fiftieth anniversary of his greatest accomplishment, Adams, feeling satisfaction in having fought the good fight, expressed, in his last words, some exultancy that the old order had not entirely passed away. With the last breath of life, John Adams said:

"Thomas Jefferson still lives."

But there is, as Adams himself had said, a divinity that shapes our ends.

Thomas Jefferson and John Adams died on the same day—July 4, 1826.

The promise of America is obvious to anyone who knows her early history: knows enough about the Founding Fathers to understand their lives and their ideals.

But the teeming millions from Europe who glutted our eastern ports of entry and pushed across the continent to the Pacific in the nineteenth century—they, for the most part, were ignorant of the details of American history. What was the promise of America to them? A promise of fertile land, cheap and abundant? A promise of great deposits of natural resources? A promise of good climate?

There have always been other places with greater natural resources, with climate as good or better, and with land more fertile and plentiful than in the United States of America; and, indeed, there were places just as accessible to Europeans —Africa, South America, Australia, Asia, which still have vast, vacant lands and undeveloped natural resources.

Those American pioneers who pushed through gaps in the mountains, driving westward, with blue vistas of hope and adventure in their eyes: were they in quest of social security or some kind of government-guaranteed existence? Were they yearning for the fat and easy life? Were they bound for the land of the common man? Most of them were common men in the general evaluation of the world. Most of them were poor and would have welcomed abundance. They all were human and would have been glad to be spared hardship and arduous labor.

But these were not the things they sought in the new world. They expected, and they encountered, more hardship and harsh toil in the raw American wilderness than they had left behind in Europe.

They were looking for a place where a common man could, God willing, become uncommon—where a man could become whatever his vision, his faith, his energy, his intellect, and his manhood combined to make him, without a government to harass him and hold him down to a common level, for benefit of the "general welfare."

In short, the promise of America was freedom.

Today, a whole generation of Americans have been educated to believe that freedom means ease and comfort.

Freedom is not free. People cannot—as most Americans loosely claim—inherit freedom. We can inherit a desire for freedom; we can inherit a social system built on the principles of freedom;

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but freedom itself must be won anew, in toil and strife, by each generation.

Freedom is not a soft way of life, but it is the only noble way for creatures made in the image of God.

When man is left free to struggle, he develops strength and wisdom by struggling. When forced into dependence upon government, he becomes a *dependent personality*, flabby and irresolute, with no will, courage, or personal convictions. A free man can dream, and will dare to enter what Job called the warfare of life to capture his dreams and transform them into reality. A dependent personality has no dream of conquering anything; he has, instead, greed: greed to get all he can for himself, not by constructive effort, but by continuing demands upon the power which made him dependent.

There are many hazards in a free society. One hazard is that there will always be people who will not manage their own affairs as well as they should, or as well as someone else thinks they should. But when you start passing laws to force people to do all the things that someone else thinks good for them, you are headed for a slave society.

The American Founding Fathers were known as liberals because they believed in freedom. They were true liberals, in the classic sense. They revolted against the autocratic use of political power. An immediate reason for the revolt was taxes. But King George's taxes on the American colonists were insignificant in comparison with what we are forced to pay today. Moreover, a great deal of money which government takes out of your paycheck today is used for purposes more destructive of individual freedom than the purposes which King George III was trying to finance with the American Stamp Acts.

The great liberal patriots of the American Revolution did not *really* revolt against payment of taxes. They revolted against the *idea of government* behind the taxes: that government had unlimited power to do what government thought proper.

The early American patriots had a deep suspicion of all governments—including the one they created. They knew that the worst threat to a man's life, liberty, and property is the government under which he lives. They knew that all governments will, if permitted, waste the labors of the people and ultimately enslave the people—always under the pretense of taking care of the people. That is why they were resolved to bind the American government down with the chains of a Constitution — limiting government's powers to performing carefully specified responsibilities. That is why they set up an elaborate system of checks and balances to keep *any* branch of the federal government from acquiring supreme power.

Afraid of concentrations of political power in the central government, the early patriots wrote the tenth article of the American Bill of Rights—the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution — reserving to the individual states the really dangerous governmental powers over the lives of citizens.

The political philosophy known as liberalism today is the reverse of the classic liberalism which founded this great nation. Today, most Americans who call themselves liberals, and who acclaim Thomas Jefferson their idol, have lost faith in the early American ideal of liberty under God for every individual, and independence from all other nations for this Republic.

Every President of the United States takes an oath of office, on the Holy Bible, which reads:

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Two things in this oath are particularly significant:

(1) Its complete wording was set down in Article 2, Section 1, Clause 8, of the Constitution and *not* left to the discretion of the elected public servant who takes the oath;

(2) Not one word, idea, or inference in it suggests any responsibility for, or excuse to meddle in, the affairs of the world.

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The language is clear; the statement is brief; the promise is solemn: the job of the President of the United States is to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.

The great classic liberals who founded this nation regarded patriotism — love of one's *own* country — as among the noblest of human sentiments; and they made it quite plain that the responsibility of the American government was to the American people. The Preamble of the Constitution says that this great document was ordained and established to secure the blessings of Liberty to *ourselves* and *our* Posterity.

Modern liberals are contemptuous of patriotism (which they call nationalism); they think it both indecent and impossible for Americans to maintain their national independence as a free Republic; and they have completely lost faith in a central idea of the American Revolution, namely, that free men, under God, can manage their own affairs.

Modern liberals are not suspicious of government: they worship government as if it were God. They want to set government up as a kind of big-brother deity to look after us and run our lives for us.

Modern liberalism rests on the assumption that political power makes men wise. Modern liberals presume that you, as an individual, if left to your own devices and resources, do not have enough decency, ability, or good sense to educate your own children, provide your own housing, prepare for your own future, or help a neighbor in desperate need.

Therefore, liberals want laws which will force you to do all things that liberals think you should do. They take money away from you and put it in a big federal pot, on the presumption that politicians and bureaucrats will make better use of it than you would. But remember, politicians and bureaucrats are, themselves, individuals. As individuals, they — according to their own liberal philosophy — are incapable of managing their own affairs. Once vested with political power, they are, presumably, transfigured and transformed — automatically injected with enough ability and wisdom to manage the affairs of everyone.

As philosophies of government, modern liberalism, communism and fascism are essentially the same. Each believes that government should have absolute power to promote the general welfare.

The trouble here is that when government has absolute power to promote the general welfare, government must also have absolute power to decide what the general welfare is. Why do communists murder people in nations they take over? They are promoting the general welfare, as communists see it.

When a politician tells you that your government has a warm, personal interest in you and that he wants government to be a big brother to you — look out. That politician (no matter how nice a fellow he may be) is herding you toward slavery.

A big-brother government is the kind that every dictator in the world has always wanted.

Nowhere in the history of the human race is there any justification for the naive faith in political power, which is bedrock in the thinking of all fascists, communists, socialists, and modern liberals.

The welfare state which modern liberals worship is not a twentieth-century invention, as they allege. It is the oldest, most reactionary kind of social organization.

The welfare state — with the usual trappings of government price controls, government-fixed minimum wages, government subsidies, government relief for the poor, and government pensions — was tried out in ancient Babylon, ancient Greece, and ancient Rome; in Mussolini's Italy, in Hitler's Germany, and in all communist countries. It has always failed to provide economic security, and has always ended in slavery.

A government which can take a warm, personal interest in one citizen can take a cold, calculating interest in another.

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A government which can subsidize your farm or business or send you checks for unemployment or relief, can also seize the bodies and property of your sons and daughters.

The classic liberalism of the Founding Fathers was idealistic. Modern liberalism is materialistic. Modern liberals, scorning talk about the noble way of life for free men, evaluate man's way of life on the basis of how much idleness and material prosperity he has.

The mass appeal of modern liberal leaders is their promise of ease and prosperity. The practice of buying votes with the voter's own money — of promising everybody something to be paid for out of the public treasury — has become a successful political racket in the past thirty years. It has become a fixed habit of both political parties.

Apparently, our modern liberals are ignorant of the lesson which the thrilling history of our own country should have taught the world: namely, that freedom — important primarily because it is essential to human dignity — creates more material prosperity than any government-planned or government-guaranteed way of life could ever do, because freedom releases, from stifling controls and burdensome regulations, the constructive energies and talents of the people.

The old American constitutional system of freedom never did — never could — eliminate poverty; but it produced greater material abundance for more people (fed, housed, and clothed more people) than any welfare state, planned economy, or communist-socialist-fascist system on record.

The Founding Fathers made prosperity in America possible when they gave us a workable means of preserving personal freedom.

Many Americans are pitifully confused in their efforts to defend *Americanism* against *communism* — because they do not really know the difference. They have the leadership of modern liberalism to thank for this confusion.

Using the police power of government to take from those who *have* for redistribution among those who *have not* is called, by modern liberals, achieving economic justice through the processes of democracy.

In communist countries, the same thing is called liquidation of capitalism through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

What is the American concept of helping the have-nots?

Every American has an individual responsibility under God to help others in distress; but the decision as to when, how much, and to whom, is legally and morally his and not his government's.

Government cannot make men prosperous, any more than it can make men good. Government cannot produce anything: it can merely seize and divide what individuals have produced. Government can give the people nothing which government has not first taken away from them. And the amount which government doles back to the people or spends to promote their welfare is always less than it takes.

The American system of government was built on political principles which are eternal.

WHO IS DAN SMOOT?

Born in Missouri, reared in Texas, Dan Smoot went to SMU getting BA and MA degrees, 1938 and 1940. In 1941, he joined the faculty at Harvard as a Teaching Fellow, doing graduate work for a doctorate in American civilization. From 1942 to 1951, he was an FBI agent: three and a half years on communist investigations; two years on FBI headquarters staff; almost four years on general FBI cases in various places. He resigned from the FBI and, from 1951 to 1955, was commentator on national radio and television programs, giving *both* sides of controversial issues. In July, 1955, he started his present profit-supported, free-enterprise business: publishing *The Dan Smoot Report,* a weekly magazine available by subscription; and producing a weekly news-analysis radio and television broadcast, available for sponsorship by reputable business firms, as an advertising vehicle. The *Report* and broadcast give *one* side of important issues: the side that presents documented truth using the American Constitution as a yardstick. If you think Smoot's materials are effective against socialism and communism, you can help immensely—help get subcribers for the *Report,* commercial sponsors for the broadcast.

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They do not change with the seasons. Hence, it is the most sinister kind of subversion for the Supreme Court, or any other agency of government, to reinterpret our fundamental charter of government in the light of contemporary conditions.

I cringe when I hear an American praise the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, and insinuate that it is an extension of the American Bill of Rights.

The UN Declaration of Human Rights is a blueprint for international socialism. It is a promise of all member nations that the force of government will be used to level and spread material benefits until everyone enjoys the same kind of sameness that characterizes a fine litter of fattening hogs.

The American Bill of Rights, on the contrary, tells government what it must *not* do!

Congress shall make *no law* respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition . . . . The right of the people to keep and bear Arms *shall not* be infringed . . . . The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, *shall not* be violated . . . .

Government shall *not*!

That is the password of liberty.

That is the American philosophy of liberty which spread abroad and tugged at the hearts of men all over the earth.

That was the promise of America.

* * *

America's Promise

America's Promise, from which this *Report* is taken, is an 18-page, paperbound handbook, setting out the basic fundamentals of constitutional Americanism. It is an attractive, particularly appropriate gift for students and others who have never had an opportunity to learn the principles and ideals which form the bedrock of our magnificent American constitutional system.

America's Promise is available at the following prices, in bulk shipment to one address:

1 to 10 copies	50¢ each
11 to 50 copies	45¢ each
51 to 100 copies	40¢ each
101 and over	35¢ each

Mailing envelopes will be included, free, with all orders for five or more copies.

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